

How They Broke *the* Mighty Guns of Heligoland

Copyright, 1922, by THE NEW YORK HERALD.
New York Herald Bureau.
Berlin, April 8.

GONE are the glories of the olden days—departed is the last vestige of German naval greatness—the Kaiser's pet project, the fortification of Heligoland as a perpetual menace to Great Britain is no more.

For the last of the gigantic fortifications which made Heligoland impregnable has been destroyed by the allied order, and now the island, which once bristled with giant guns and was surrounded with deadly mines, is again the home of simple fisher-folk.

When the British handed it over to the Germans one bright summer day in 1890 it was hardly anticipated that twenty-four years later the little North Sea isle, armed to the very edge of its cliffs, would be a pistol pointed at the breast of England. To-day the British are supervising the demolition of its last fortifications.

The nation which created this formidable outpost of naval ambitions is itself demolishing it, and in so doing the prophecy of the Kaiser, "The future of Germany is on the water," has met a caustic refutation.

The romantic expectations with which the Germans bought the island are a matter of the past, and what now is going on in Heligoland is a process of the most prosaic nature and a most disheartening one to those performing it. It consists of the systematic destruction of some of the best fortifications and one of the best naval harbors in existence.

This work is being carried out by German engineers and laborers under the supervision of British naval officers and civil engineers, who form the Heligoland sub-commission of the Naval Inter-Allied Commission of Control. As for the destruction of the harbor, care has been taken to leave intact what is necessary for the requirements of a purely commercial port. In fact, with the removal of those of its parts which served war purposes the harbor of Heligoland will be more suitable for commercial craft than it ever was before.

The considerable amount of scrap material yielded by the work of demolition is characteristic of the time, energy and material invested in the fortifications. By September 30, 1921, the quantity of concrete and brickwork demolished was about 200,000 cubic yards, and in connection with the work done until the same date about 132 tons of explosives had been used. Even with the use of the most efficient and modern methods and devices the task of razing the fortifications was unusually difficult.

Heligoland's History One Of Many Frequent Changes

Heligoland became German territory thirty-two years ago. It repeatedly changed hands in the course of its history. Originally a domain of the dukes of Holstein-Gottorp, it came under Danish sovereignty in 1714. A hundred years later the British took possession of it and provided it with a Governor.

Negotiations between England and Germany in the latter part of the eighties led to a treaty in 1890, whereby Germany, against the cession of rights in Africa, obtained the control of the island and incorporated it in the Kingdom of Prussia. The ceremony of handing the island over to Germany took place August 10, 1890. British sailors stood in rank and file while their superiors shook hands with the German commission which took possession.

The fortifications in Heligoland were begun in 1908 and finished in 1914. Since January, 1917, the island served as a submarine base, but the U-boat docks were not completed before the last year of the war. After the British raid on Zeebrugge the defensive devices in Heligoland were considerably improved; it was also completely surrounded by barbed-wire fences erected below the surface of the sea. The garrison numbered 4,500 men; after the hostilities had commenced, the civil population was removed to the German seashore, where the city of Blankensee became its temporary abode.

In regard to the system of its fortifications, Heligoland resembled much more a battleship than a fortress. It comprised the war harbor and submarine base on the one hand, and the fortifications on the other. The former possessed all the characteristics of a strong naval base, while the forts sported the most modern and powerful guns Krupp was able to produce.

The most conspicuous part of the island's armaments were four twin turrets, with long-barreled guns of 12 inches caliber. These turrets were known as "Anna," "Bertha," "Cesar" and "Dora." There were eight 11 inch howitzers and four 8.2 inch single-turret guns; further, eight 4 inch

guns on the mole, four 3.2 inch guns on the dune and four 3.2 inch guns on the upper part of the island, as well as one 4 inch and ten 1.3 inch anti-aircraft guns.

The emplacements of some of the big guns were armored with steel plates, about 3-feet 4 inches thick, and the protection of the dug-outs consisted of walls and ceilings of solid concrete of a thickness of 15 feet. The hospital, which was equipped in most up-to-date fashion and contained all implements of medical science—like an X-ray

At top—Dismounted guns that once dominated the North Sea. Above—Giant mortars now useless.

chamber, a laboratory, &c.—was imbedded 60 feet deep in the solid rock. Ever since 1914 Heligoland was considered impregnable and the British fleet refrained from any attack upon the island, the guns of which fired just one shot during the four years of the war; they had no opportunity to fire more. And they never will, because the huge barrels and their emplacements are a pile of ruins and the steel constructions which aroused the admiration of the experts have become a heap of scrap iron.

If, however, the artillery of Heligoland was too formidable to ever become effective the submarines for which it served as a refuge were the most active weapons of the German navy. The fortifications and naval constructions in Heligoland cost Germany the counter-value of \$150,000,000, but the damage caused to the enemy's shipping by the U-boats of Heligoland exceeded that figure by far.

It is only natural that the demolition of the tremendous and singularly systematic fortifications of the isle should now necessitate a correspondingly great amount of energy and systematic action. The results accomplished in this respect within the last two years are indeed remarkable.

Article 115 of the Versailles Treaty provided that "the fortifications, military establishments and harbors of the Island of Heligoland and Dune shall be destroyed

under the supervision of the principal allied Governments, by German labor and at the expense of Germany, within a period to be determined by the said Governments."

A Modern Dreamer who Really Believes in Fairies

DUGALD WALKER is the most whimsical of persons. Nor is any one more sincere. He believes in fairies, and as surely as truth is relative—which it is—his belief is well based, for there are fairies. He knows them. He has them in his studio.

Robin Ringlet is Dugald Walker's other name. He must have another name—for his fairies.

He is about 35 years old. He is serious looking. He is an artist and a writer and a poet. He is a child and a man. No child could ever believe in fairies more sincerely than does Dugald Walker. No man could ever have been as sincere in any belief as he is in this.

Dugald Walker illustrates fairy stories better than any one else can. His illustrations of his own "Dream Boats," of "Anderson's Fairy Tales" and of Irish folk tales are pictures of real fairies and brownies and elves and pixies. He has seen the fleeting creatures with his own eyes and has pictured them as he has seen them.

It is not his work that has converted him. He has converted his work. He was not educated to believe in fairies. He believes in them in spite of his education. He is really a glorified sort of child.

If you have your mind made up to not believe in fairies, then you would better not go near Dugald Walker. He would make you believe. He would convince you against your will.

If you could talk with this idealistic man of our coldly scientific twentieth century he would soon leave you in no doubt of the magic country of fairies, his sparkling eyes (that are sometimes green and sometimes yellow) would add the enthusiastic words in completely proving it to you.

A son of Virginia, he has never forgotten the stories of elf land once told him by negro mummies. A little digression will illustrate his unquestioning belief. It seems that some one having lost a beloved parent, read a poem of Mr. Walker's, "The Legacy of Prayer," and promptly wrote to him. This letter was the beginning of a

deep yet quite impersonal friendship, for though this occurred several years ago these two have never yet met. Once, before starting on a trip around the world this friend of mystery wrote Mr. Walker asking to know what gift he would desire brought back to him. Mr. Walker asked for a bit of earth and sand from every separate body of land visited! Months after he received many little bags containing what he had requested. This gift from other lands arrived just after the publication of his well known book "Dream Boats." So taking a little shell that had become priceless to him in the associations it contained he filled it with some sand from one of the little bags the label of which indicated that the contents had come from an island in the West Indies.

His retreat is a large glass inclosed studio overlooking one of the city's noisiest, dusty streets, yet strange to say, while the sunbeams dance through the glass the noise and dust seem to stay without. One also senses the presence of wood spirits and ocean pixies, elves of glade and wave in this room of strangely assorted mementoes. The studio is lovely with many exquisite bits from here, there and everywhere, as well as with many beautiful paintings and drawings of the well known books he has so charmingly illustrated. There are seashells of every tint and form, feathers from brilliantly colored exotic birds, treasured mummies of butterflies and other beautiful creatures.

An instance of his versatility was the pageant he arranged in honor of Cardinal Mercier's visit to New York, in which some 30,000 children took part. The mise en scene of the 1922 fashion show was also a result of his imaginative as well as his practical side (always unusual in an artist), for its Japanese setting was devised by Mr. Walker from two tons of 60,000 square feet of gray paper, such as is used in laundried shirt bosoms, and this paper was all transformed by his magic brush and pots of paint. Imagine making a Japanese Fairyland from shirt bosom

paper! His genius in the combination of color and line is amazing; more than amazing when one knows that he delights in working out his fairylike stage effects from mere nothings such as colored paper, gray painted peanuts (which look like silkworm cocoons when attached to a mulberry tree made of tinted tissue paper), and leaves that are pinned to their background in such a way that each pin glistens like a dewdrop when the cleverly arranged lights touch them.

Mr. Walker's message is of the immortal spirit of play and happiness, for he feels that almost every act of ours can be traced back to some childhood memory—and how many memories we have tucked deep down in our hearts!

The work of demolition began in February, 1920, after the representatives of the Naval Inter-Allied Commission of Control had paid their first visit to Heligoland.

high for German laborers. Skilled men received 13.30 marks an hour and unskilled ones 13 marks in addition to such facilities as cheap lodgings and canteen meals.

The demolition was carried out with the aid of drilling and boring machinery and explosives of the most modern type. The emplacements of the different batteries, the gun turrets and, in particular, the protective walls and ceilings of the dugouts, which consisted of huge blocks and powerful strata of solid concrete, were blown up. The same method of destruction was applied to the different breakwaters, moles and so-called "calissons."

The gun barrels and a great part of the armor plates and steel constructions were cut to pieces. The hydraulic rooms which were connected with the gun turrets and with other artillery devices, were likewise demolished. The German engineers used an apparatus which somewhat resembles the notorious flame thrower of the war. It shoots out pure oxygen, which burns into the strongest steel plate holes one foot deep and one inch wide. The explosives are then inserted into these holes, whereby the destruction is made complete.

The demolition of the war harbor was even more difficult than that of the fortifications. A complete annihilation of the breakwater which surrounds the inner harbor appeared inadvisable, because not only would the island itself have become defenseless against the gradual but unceasing destructive action of the sea but the ships coming to and from Heligoland would have been in permanent danger, especially in winter, when the gales around the island are particularly strong.

It is but a few weeks ago that part of the dune of the island was washed away by the waves accompanying one of the furious gales of the North Sea. Furthermore, the number of ships landing on and leaving Heligoland is now even greater than usual, because the scrap material resulting from the dismantlement is shipped to Germany. It is sold there to contractors, and the material of commercial

Great howitzer, as it was in the days of the empire.

According to the German estimate the destruction of the fortifications and war harbor would have lasted seven years; but the requirements laid down by the Allies representatives will be fulfilled in about two. The inter-allied sub-commission comprised eleven officers and twenty-three men, under the command of Capt. Leonard Willan and later of Capt. Andrew Cunningham, both of the British Navy.

The actual demolition was carried out

by a number of German engineers and 787 laborers. Of these 430 were active in the harbor and 357 on the fortifications. The pay of the workmen was comparatively

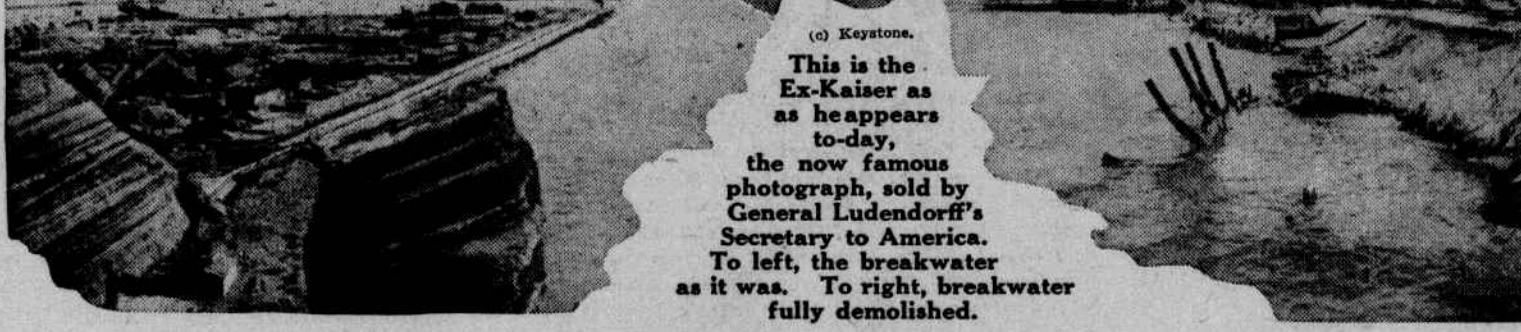
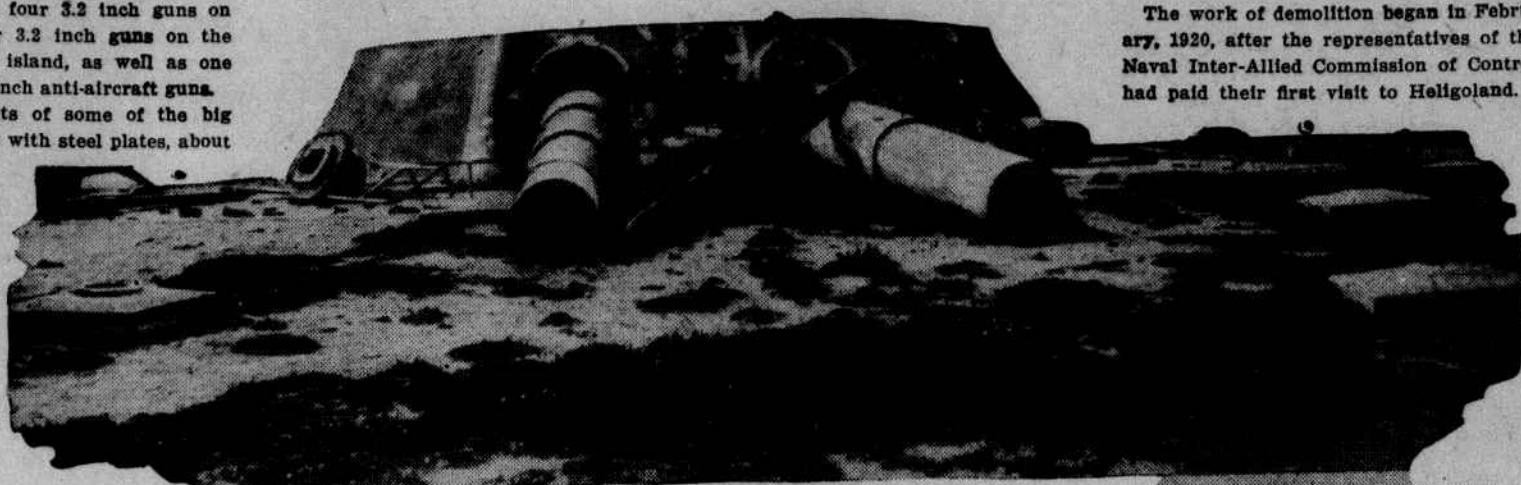
Great Breakwater's Ruin Accomplished by Dynamite

In certain places of the harbor matters were simplified by blowing up the foundations of the breakwater and leaving the completion of the destruction to the action of the sea, which will gradually wash away the debris left by the explosion. It is not, however, the intention of the Naval Inter-Allied Commission of Control to annihilate the harbor completely. Only those parts of the breakwater were removed which served, or could again be made to serve, active warfare. Thus a considerable portion of the breakwater has been spared from destruction.

By October 1, 1921, the demolition had made such progress that the sub-commission of allied engineers in charge of the supervision could leave Heligoland. After that date only periodical inspections by Admiral Sir Edward Charlton of the British navy, president of the N. I. A. C. C., and by other members of the commission were made. By February 15 of the current year all machinery in the power houses had been removed.

The only item still left on the working programme is the demolition and reconstruction, on new lines approved by the Allies, of the inclined tunnel which connects the lower part of the island, the "Unterland," with the "Oberland," or upper island. This tunnel is expected to be demolished by April 15, the last day of April being the latest date admissible.

On that day the complete dismantlement of Heligoland will become an accomplished fact, and on the occasion of his recent tour of inspection Sir Edward Charlton expressed to Herr Riekert, president of the German sub-commission in charge of the demolition, his recognition of the effective execution by the German commission "of what had undoubtedly been a most unpleasant duty."



(c) Keystone.
This is the Ex-Kaiser as he appears to-day, the now famous photograph, sold by General Ludendorff's Secretary to America. To left, the breakwater as it was. To right, breakwater fully demolished.

